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Loyalty, dedication behind the doors at CIA

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About 15 percent of the Central Intelligence Agency labor force is undercover. So, the remaining 85 percent is overtly holding down the fort.

As a result, there are more employment opportunities than you think in the four main departments of the agency: intelligence, administration, science and technology, and operations.

Each department has its own complex structure of responsibilities but the entrance into the agency is personnel, which falls in administration.

"We scan the country for people," says Robert L. Chico, coordinator for student programs. Chico organizes the graduate and undergraduate programs with the CIA, and he's very familiar with overall recruitment.

Chico, and Larry Curran, deputy director for administration, work out of an agency building in Vienna, Va. "You can walk in to the CIA and apply in Rosslyn (Va.)," notes Chico. The office is located at 1820 N. Fort Myer Dr., in the Ames Building.

Hours of the CIA are 24 a day, 365 days a year. But that's not a consideration for the intelligence agency, says Chico, since its employees share a high degree of credibility, and loyalty.

"People who work for the CIA have a tremendous sense of pride, and an over-bearing sense of dedication," he adds. Unlike some private enterprises, there is a very low turnover rate.

The headquarters of the CIA sprawls out in Langley, Va. A new employee may be placed there once he or she is hired. But, approach the gate for an application and you'll incur a security check and a polite command to re-route to the Rosslyn office.

Nevertheless, if you have what the agency is looking for,

then you'll be satisfied with the CIA. "Our salaries are competitive with the private industry," says Chico.

"We tell people what the job entails and generally explain what they would be doing," says Chico, who also explains there are no surprises for future employees, they're aware of the responsibilities that come with a particular job.

Once a person applies, he or she must undergo a minimum of four to six months background investigation. This is followed by a polygraph (lie detector) test, an appointment with the medical staff which includes a psychologist, and an interview by appropriate staff members.

And that's the way it is. No changes, no appeals. Chico stresses the importance of the review because of the importance of the agency. The deputy director of intelligence is directly tied to the president, who depends on the director as well.

The full-scale security investigation and review procedure does not discourage applicants, though. Chico says the agency receives about 250,000 inquiries a year from people who want to

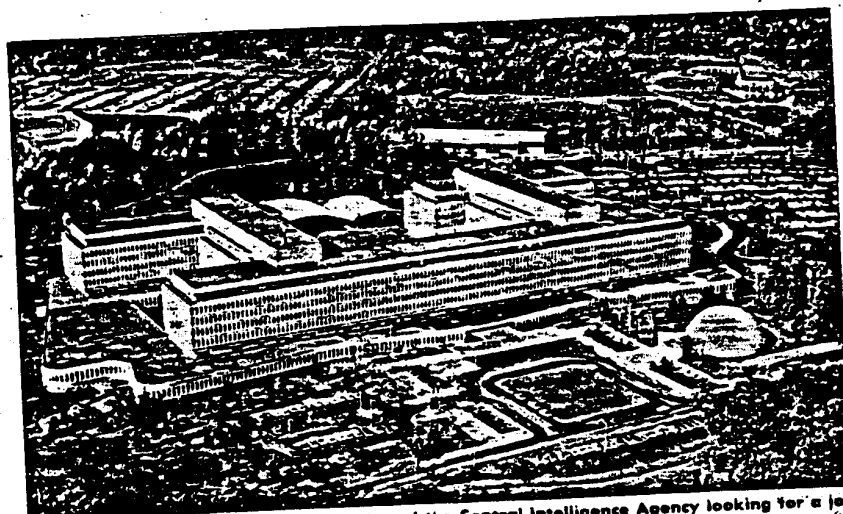
work for the CIA. Even some people who are not U.S. citizens call for employment only to find out they are ineligible.

"We're very high on academic standing, linguistic ability — being worldly, having traveled — and, being a U.S. citizen. We're like the Marines: 'we're looking for a few good men and women'," coordinator of student programs.

According to Chico, the CIA does not request top-level security, it demands it. Everybody in the agency is cleared at the same level, professionals, clericals, and technical/blue collar workers.

Professional staff members, for which the agency is continually looking, includes the high-tech people, scientists, chemists, mathematicians, and economists. Clerical openings are usually administrative assistants, secretaries, clerks, and stenographers. Blue collar workers include electricians, mechanics, pressmen, and forklift operators.

Naturally, hiring for the CIA is a nation-wide effort which the agency has 10 field offices for recruiting located in cities such as Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Atlanta. Advertisements for applicants appear in trade magazines, and major market newspapers.



Don't approach the Langley, Va. complex of the Central Intelligence Agency looking for a job? application.